Remarks

The claims have been amended to provide that the step of the user defining in a proxy letter a situation in which the proxy letter is allowed to handle the security critical activity (and in claim 18, defining the two groups of situations) occurs before starting execution of the security critical activity. Support for this amendment is found in Figure 2 (steps 100 and 102) and on page 8 beginning in the last paragraph.

Claims 10-11, 14, and 18 were rejected as anticipated by SCHNECK et al. 5,933,498. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to claim 10, SCHNECK et al. does not disclose the step of the user of the computer defining in a proxy letter a situation in which the proxy letter is allowed to handle the security critical activity. The Official Action points to column 21, lines 26-27 of SCHNECK et al. for this feature. However, this passage discloses that the user can be provided with an opportunity to indicate that the dataset should be treated as unprotected, and it is not clear where the proxy letter is to be found in this passage. If the indication that the dataset should be treated as unprotected is the proxy letter, then it is not clear how this "indication" is allowed to handle the security critical activity, which in SCHNECK et al. is the transmission of a dataset and rules for decrypting the dataset. There is no security critical activity being handled by this

opportunity to make a selection. Claim 18 is allowable for the same reason.

Further, this passage refers to Figure 10(a) and goes on to state that if the user incorrectly indicates that the protected dataset is unprotected, no access to the data is available except in the encrypted form. As is apparent from Figure 10(a) and the steps laid out therein, the situation in which the user can be provided with an opportunity to indicate that the dataset should be treated as unprotected is merely one of the rules that invokes dire consequences (no access to data except in encrypted form) if elected. The user cannot change these rules or access data against the rules.

The amendment to the claims clarifies that the defining steps of claims 10 and 18 occur before executing the security critical activity. SCHNECK et al., regardless whether the opportunity to indicate that the dataset should be treated as unprotected is the claimed proxy letter, discloses that this occurs during execution of the security critical activity, not before as now claimed.

Accordingly, the claims avoid the rejection under §102.

Claims 12-13 were rejected as unpatentable over SCHNECK et al. in view of WINIGER 5,845,068. Claim 15 was rejected as unpatentable over SCHNECK et al. in view of BELANGER et al. 2001/0014839. Claim 16 was rejected as unpatentable over SCHNECK et al. in view of SHIAKALLIS 6,009,518. Claim 17 and 19 were
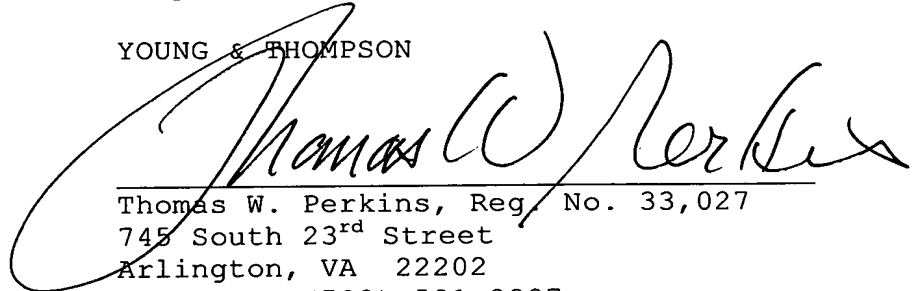
rejected as unpatentable over SCHNECK et al. in view of FOLADARE et al. 5,914,472.   Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested for the reasons given above.   The additional references do not make up for the above-noted shortcomings of SCHNECK et al.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance.   Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or under 37 C.F.R.§1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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